
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 9 January 2017

by Louise Phillips MA (Cantab) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 19 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/R3650/D/16/3162637

Lyemun, Lodge Hill Road, Lower Bourne GU10 3RE

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Esther Foster against the decision of Waverley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref WA/2016/1566, dated 5 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 3 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is a detached garage to the front of the house.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The decision notice makes reference to Policy TD1 of the Draft Waverley Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies, which was published for comment on 19 August 2016. The plan has therefore reached a relatively advanced stage of preparation but, as I have no information about the number or nature of any representations which might have been made, I give it little weight in my decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The stretch of Lodge Hill Road within which the appeal site lies has a relatively narrow carriageway with limited footways and an abundance of trees and other vegetation at the roadside. The houses on both sides have deep front gardens and there is a strong building line set well back from the road. Thus the landscaping dominates and the area has a semi-rural character.
5. The appeal property occupies a corner plot at the junction of Lodge Hill Road and Pine Grove. It is proposed to erect a detached garage within the front garden, close to the boundaries with both roads. Measuring approximately 4.9m wide x 6.4m deep x 3.8m high, it would be a sizeable structure sited well in front of the established building line described above.
6. The pair of dwellings immediately to the west of the appeal site, on the other corner of Pine Grove, are much closer to the road than the appeal property, but

they are older and of a different style. They neither detract from nor diminish the significance of the deliberate pattern of development set out to the east. Indeed, beyond Pine Grove to the west, the character of Lodge Hill Road gradually becomes more built up and so the presence of buildings near to the road further west does not justify the appeal scheme. The position of the proposed garage in the stretch of Lodge Hill Road to the east of Pine Grove would be at odds with the distinctive pattern of development there to the detriment of the semi-rural character of the area.

7. There is a high and mature Cypress hedge along the boundary of the appeal site with Pine Grove, which extends along the front boundary of the site with Lodge Hill Road. This would constitute a very effective screen for the proposed development. It would also be possible to drop the ground level of the garage below that of the house and garden, which would reduce its prominence, and there is no dispute that it would be of an attractive design finished in appropriate materials.
8. However, the siting of the garage within the front garden of the property would be fundamentally incongruous in the area. Notwithstanding the appellant's intention to retain the Cypress hedge, should it be reduced or removed for any reason, the development would be significantly harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The Council's guidance on residential extensions¹ in respect of garages and carports states that building in front gardens should be avoided in order to, amongst other things, protect the setting of the street scene (page 30). It also recognises the limitations of vegetation as a permanent screen (page 19). This guidance is particularly pertinent in the case before me and I see no reason to depart from it.
9. Therefore, I conclude that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. Thus it would conflict with Policies D1 and D4 of the Waverley Local Plan 2002, which seek development designed to preserve the visual character and distinctiveness of a locality; and with Policy FNP1 of the Farnham Neighbourhood Plan, which has a similar aim. It would also conflict with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework concerning good design.

Other Matters

10. In reaching my decision, I acknowledge that no members of the public have objected to the proposal. The appellant further states that the Council advised her prior to purchasing the property that a garage in the proposed location would be acceptable. However, I have no details of this advice and I must determine the appeal on the evidence before me. These matters neither outweigh nor alter my findings set out above.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Louise Phillips

INSPECTOR

¹ Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document, October 2010.